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Navy & Marine Corps Medical News (MEDNEWS)  
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This service distributes news and information to  
Sailors and Marines, their families, civilian  
employees, and retired Navy and Marine Corps families.  
Further dissemination of this e-mail is encouraged.

Headlines this week include:

(97042) NNMC receives Top Environmental Quality Awards  
(97043) Navy Eye Docs Help Guatemalans See Better  
(97044) Naples Corpsman Delivers Peace Dividend to Armenia  
(97045) Only a Dog Would Do This Job  
(97046) Corpsman loses 75 pounds to Join Navy  
(97047) LEAPS Symposium Announced  
(97048) Plan Shortens Hawaii's Pet Quarantine  
(97049) TRICARE Question and Answer  
(97050) HEALTHWATCH: Clean `Em if You Want to Keep `Em

Headline: NNMC receives Top Environmental Quality Awards  
BETHESDA, MD -- The National Naval Medical  
Center (NNMC), Bethesda, MD, has won four Chief of Naval  
Operations and Secretary of the Navy environmental awards  
for significantly improving air and water quality and  
reducing the amount of waste it disposes. Environmental  
programs saved the medical center more than \$1.6 million  
since 1993 and significantly lessened its environmental  
impact in the local community.

"In three years NNMC saved more than 5,000 cubic yards  
of landfill space, reduced air pollutants by 7,000 pounds  
and saved more than 30,000 trees," said Beth Law, NNMC  
environmental specialist.

NNMC took four of the five categories in which it was  
eligible, winning the Environmental Quality Award, Pollution  
Prevention Award, Recycling Award and the Individual  
Environmental Quality Award.

"NNMC civilians and Sailors made a strong commitment to  
make our environmental programs work," said Patrick Spahn,  
the leading environmental engineer at NNMC.  
By HM3 Joseph L. McDonald, NNMC Public Affairs

-USN-

Headline: Navy Eye Docs Help Guatemalans See Better  
BETHESDA, MD -- Word spreads of their arrival before  
they ever leave the United States -- American doctors are

coming. The promise of medical care to a remote area of Guatemala devastated by civil conflict, lures hundreds to seek out these doctors, even if it means walking more than 24 hours to reach the remote site. The line forms early in the day, before the sun rises, outside the gates of the makeshift hospital. Many wait, hoping to see a doctor for the first time.

LCDR Asa Morton, MC; CDR John Avallone, MC; LCDR Athanasius George, MC; and HM3 Rick D. Hawkins from National Naval Medical Center Bethesda, MD Ophthalmology Department left February 7 to spend 12 days bringing eye care to about 350 people in the remote mountain village of Nebaj, with the non-profit group, Helps International.

"I'm very excited to be able to experience this type of training," Hawkins said. "I've been on the (USNS) Comfort, but this will be more of a real world clinical environment."

Morton traveled to Guatemala last year, and, through his enthusiasm was able to interest his colleagues in joining him this year. Morton explained that it's not only important to bring medical services to Guatemala, but the training and experience the doctors will receive is beneficial for future Navy humanitarian relief efforts such as those on going in Bosnia.

Lois O'Neal, group leader with Helps International said, "Twenty-nine Guatemalan nurses will train alongside the American doctors and nurses. It's this type of training that's vital to the future of medical care in Guatemala."

The group is doing more than just bringing medical care and services to a devastated country, they are also bringing something for the future. It's like the old fish parable -- you can give a man a fish and he'll have food for a day, or, you can teach a man to fish and he'll have food for a lifetime.

by JO3 Andee Montgomery, USN, NNMCMC Bethesda

-USN-

Headline: Naples Corpsman Delivers Peace Dividend to Armenia

NAPLES, ITALY -- When HM2 Charles A. Aspaugh of Mount Vernon, IN, joined the Navy in June 1982 to "see the world," he didn't expect the Navy to offer him the opportunity to peek behind the Iron Curtain - certainly not on duty and most definitely not in connection with humanitarian assistance to an Eastern Bloc nation.

The world is a different place now in the absence of the Iron Curtain than it was when Aspaugh joined the Navy. Both the Navy and the provinces of the former Soviet Union face new challenges and common goals. One such goal is helping our former Eastern Bloc neighbors build strong, stable democratic institutions.

Initiatives like Humanitarian Assistance Project Armenia, a joint effort involving 40 Army, Air Force and Navy personnel aimed at improving patient care capabilities at eight major Armenia hospitals, are meant to assist emerging democracies previously affiliated with the former

Soviet Union.

Aspaugh, a biomedical repair technician, helped repair, evaluate and install more than \$15 million in excess medical equipment as a member of the Humanitarian Assistance Project Armenia Team. The surplus equipment, left over from NATO's drawdown in Europe, included x-ray processors, incubators, pacemakers, microscopes and surgical instruments. Aspaugh also showed his Armenian counterparts how to best use and maintain the equipment.

"It was really quite a peace dividend," said 33-year-old Aspaugh who reported to the Biomedical Engineering Department at U. S. Naval Hospital, Naples in October 1993. "Conditions in Armenia are rough. They are working hard to establish a free-market workplace. Meanwhile, money is in short supply so the hospitals go without badly needed new equipment. We found the Armenian medical personnel very professional. They were eager to learn new medical procedures and to make full use of the equipment we installed."

By JO2 Mark K. Hollis, Naval Support Activity, Naples

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Headline: Only a Dog Would Do This Job

CAMP PENDLETON, CA -- When you hear the saying, "this job is for the dogs," it would be easy to conjure up a dirty job that no one wants to do. But one four-legged gal would argue that only a dog could accomplish such a sensitive job.

Nicola, a gentle golden retriever, who parades the corridors and the non-patient areas in Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton, CA, (NHCP) has quickly become an honorary staff member.

"Nicola is wonderful with patients. She helps them to feel that they're in a warm and caring environment," says her trainer, LT Carl Lorenz, MSC, who works in the hospital's internal medicine department.

Lorenz volunteered to train Nicola in the fundamentals of being a service dog for the Canine Companions for Independence (CCI). CCI is a national organization dedicated to raising service, hearing, social and facility dogs to assist people with varying mobile limitations. As a service dog Nicola will perform tasks for people confined to a wheelchair or other service limitations.

During Nicola's 12-month basic training she will learn to obey 25 to 30 basic commands before she continues on to the eight-month advanced course at CCI. The basic commands such as sit, stay, get in the car and up on the wall are the foundation for Nicola functioning as the hands or legs of a person that is unable to perform tasks that many of us take for granted such as turning off the lights.

"She is doing well. She doesn't take more than a couple of repetitions for her to learn. I watch her perform with other dogs of similar age and she is one of the best," says Lorenz.

Nicola accompanies Lorenz most of the day just as she

will once she is permanently assigned to an individual. So she has become well known in her seven months at NHCP. Many of Lorenz's patients make a special trip to his office just to say 'hello' to Nicola when they are in the clinic on other business.

"My regular patients even bring her treats," says Lorenz.

Nicola may have a cold nose but she has definitely warmed the hearts of all that know her. On the staff bulletin board at the hospital you'll find a picture of Nicola with the word "canine staff" under it.

By Kimberly Allen, BUMED Public Affairs Office

-USN-

Headline: Corpsman loses 75 pounds to join Navy

BETHESDA, MD -- In 1990, Anacato 'Tony' Ancheta needed money for college and the only route he could think of was joining the Navy just as his brother Eddie did. There was just one obstacle -- he had to lose 75 pounds.

More than six years later HM2 Ancheta works in the microbiology lab at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) in Bethesda, MD.

"It wasn't easy," he explained. "It took a lot of hard work and dedication. I had to totally rearrange the way I lived my life."

Ancheta, who was 20 years old at the time, did a complete about-face with his daily routine.

"I started out by totally changing my diet. Instead of eating one solid meal a day and junk food the rest of the time, I started eating three solid meals a day. For breakfast I would eat a bowl of cereal. For lunch I would have a salad and for dinner I would eat a meal with no fat content," he explained.

This wasn't easy for Ancheta who had grown accustomed to his daily eating habits. Luckily his family helped him stay on track.

"My brothers Richard and Chris helped me out a lot. They made sure I didn't pig out on fast food and junk food. They kept me on track with my workouts."

Ancheta's workout plan was nothing short of spectacular for his size at the time. At 5'8" and 250 pounds, the recruiter at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) in Fresno, CA informed Ancheta he was 75 pounds overweight, according to the Navy's standards, at that time. He ran one mile a day every day for three weeks. When the three weeks were over he didn't stop. He added a mile to the workout. In fact he kept adding one mile until he got up to five miles a day.

Once he met the Navy's weight standards, Ancheta enlisted, but his motivation did not stop. By the time he left boot camp he weighed approximately 150 pounds.

Ancheta still does his daily workout. In fact he is a command fitness instructor for the remedial PRT program at NNMC.

Ancheta has some words of advice for people trying to overcome those stubborn few pounds from the holidays or even get back into standards.

"Don't give up. No matter how many people tell you to lose weight, you need to do it for yourself and only you."

By JO3 Jerome A. Pollos, NNMC Public Affairs

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Headline: LEAPS Symposium announced

WASHINGTON -- The 1997 Lewis E. Angelo Professional Symposium (LEAPS) will be hosted in Chicago's Swissotel from 2-6 March 1997, in conjunction with the American College of Healthcare Executives' (ACHE) 40th Congress on Healthcare Management.

The mission of LEAPS is to provide a premier networking, educational and professional healthcare forum for Navy, Coast Guard, and Public Health Service health care executives of all Corps.

LEAPS activities begin Sunday with the ACHE convocation, and continue through the week with the Resource Center (which includes mentors, detailers, career planners, specialty leaders, demonstrations, and more), the new LEAPS School of Executive Medicine, and culminating with the Thursday Program.

The ACHE Board of Governors' Exam will be held for those seeking advancement to Diplomate and becoming a Certified Healthcare Executive (CHE).

The new LEAPS School of Executive Medicine will sponsor several continuing education opportunities, and will provide yet another opportunity for attendees to broaden their horizons, and learn more about various topics related to executive health care.

The fee for LEAPS 1997 is \$75.00, for those who register and pay in advance, and \$85.00 on-site. Advance registration is encouraged. You can register now via the MSC Homepage (under the BUMED Homepage) on the World Wide Web at <http://support1.med.navy.mil>. The Homepage is the primary source of information and the primary method of registration.

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Headline: Plan Shortens Hawaii's Pet Quarantine

PEARL HARBOR, HI -- The State Board of Agriculture recently approved a plan to cut Hawaii's 120-day quarantine period for pets entering the state to 30 days.

An agriculture spokesman said the plan, which adds rules to ensure pets do not bring rabies into the state, could go into effect as early as this summer if Governor Ben Cayetano signs it.

Under the proposed changes, pet owners would:

- get their pets two vaccinations against rabies within one year of arriving in Hawaii;

- have a microchip implanted in the animal to ensure

identification and confirm vaccinations;

- have the animal tested for rabies using a new fluorescent antibody test three months before arriving;
- quarantine the animal for 30 days upon arrival while the test is verified; and
- bring the animal back for a follow-up exam 90 days after release from quarantine.

State officials said no rabies cases have been reported in Hawaii since the four-month quarantine went into effect in 1912.

Only animals entering Hawaii from Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia are exempt from quarantine. Those countries have no rabies and their programs to prevent the introduction of the disease that are just as strict as Hawaii's current standards.

By JO1 Rita Bargeloh, Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

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HEADLINE: TRICARE Question and Answer

WASHINGTON -- Question: I have an eligible family member with special needs. How does TRICARE fit in with the Program for Persons with Disabilities, also known as the Program for the Handicapped?

Answer: The Program for Persons with Disabilities (PFPWD) is a financial assistance program for active duty dependents with severe physical disabilities or with moderate to severe mental retardation who cannot get specialized training or care through public resources.

Active duty members can take advantage of both TRICARE and the PFPWD programs concurrently. The exception is that authorized services provided in conjunction with the PFPWD qualifying condition cannot be furnished under the basic program as long as the qualifying condition exists and there is a PFPWD benefit authorization outstanding.

The PFPWD is used concurrently with TRICARE Prime, Extra or Standard. Authorization for benefits under PFPWD does not affect your enrollment in TRICARE Prime. It does provide an additional financial option to explore when utilizing medical resources. When you are enrolled in TRICARE Prime, you are assigned a Primary Care Manager (PCM), who has the responsibility to authorize specialty care under the Prime program. Benefits not normally covered may be cost shared under the PFPWD.

Because of the cost associated with care for family members with special needs, most families will be encouraged to join the TRICARE Prime option. However, because some services are also covered by other state and federal agencies, coverage of all exceptional family members' health care needs cannot be facilitated through TRICARE Prime. Check with your regional TRICARE Service Center to see if TRICARE Prime is the best option for your particular family member, given the support of multi-specialty case management.

Source: Department of Defense (Health Affairs) Website at  
www.ha.osd.mil

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HEALTHWATCH: Clean 'Em if You Want to Keep 'Em

WASHINGTON -- As a child, losing a tooth was somehow worthwhile when you woke to find that the tooth that caused you so much pain had been replaced with money from the tooth fairy. As an adult, there is no comfort tucked under a pillow if you were to lose a tooth or teeth. To protect yourself from mourning such a loss, take care of your teeth. Brushing is not enough -- you need to floss.

People grossly under rate the importance of flossing. No matter how vigorously you brush you will not be able to dislodge particles that get stuck between teeth. These particles can lead to tooth decay, the most common disease-related reason for tooth extraction.

Flossing will also remove plaque, the film of bacteria that forms continually on the teeth. Plaque can cause gingivitis, a gum disease. If unchecked, gingivitis may progress to periodontitis, a disease that attacks the supporting structures of your teeth which could result in tooth loss.

The most effective method for controlling plaque is at home flossing and brushing according to Navy dentist LCDR Tim Neumann, DC, stationed at the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

"A big part of dental health is up to the individual," said Neumann, "A dentist can restore decayed teeth, but the best bet is to prevent the decay from occurring in the first place. Proper brushing combined with flossing can make this happen."

Choose a floss that is comfortable for you. It is not important what type of floss you use, just that you use it.

Remember, you don't have to floss all of your teeth, just the ones you want to keep.

By Kimberly Allen, BUMED Public Affairs

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Feedback and comments are welcome. Story submissions are encouraged. Contact Jan Davis, MEDNEWS editor, at e-mail address mednews@bms200.med.navy.mil, telephone 202/762-3223 (DSN 762-3223),  
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